

# PROJECT EVALUATION LEARNING BRIEF

July 2020

This learning brief is a summary of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations prepared by the Owl RE consultancy for use by IOM project staff and management and the Fund. Details on all of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be found in the full evaluation report.

<b>Evaluation type:</b>	External independent ex-post evaluation
<b>Evaluator(s):</b>	Patricia Goldschmid Owl RE
<b>Evaluation visit:</b>	17-21 February 2020
<b>Final report:</b>	21 July 2020
<b>Commissioned by:</b>	IOM Development Fund ("The Fund")

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**Evaluation purpose:** To assess the relevance of the project for the stakeholders and beneficiaries, to determine whether the project has achieved its intended objective; the effectiveness and efficiency of project management and implementation; promote transparency and accountability, assist the Fund in its decision-making, better equip staff to make judgments about the project and to improve the effectiveness for potential future project funding.

**Evaluation criteria:** Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability

**Evaluation methodology:** Document review and semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion

## PROJECT SUMMARY

With a population of approximately 6.4 million, El Salvador is the smallest territory in Central America and the most densely populated. Historically, the country has faced many challenges including substantial civil unrest and violence, a stagnant economy, and natural disasters, among others. This has resulted in many Salvadorians leaving the country over the last two decades, with most trying to reach the United States of America (USA). With recent changes in the USA migration policies, El Salvador experienced a significant increase in the number of returning nationals, which represents an important migration management challenge to the Government of El Salvador (GoES).

The objective of this project was to contribute to the comprehensive reintegration of the returned Salvadoran population through interinstitutional coordination. The main areas of work included:

- Strengthening capacities of civil servants at the VRES (*Ventanillas de Orientación y Seguimiento a Personas Salvadoreñas Retornadas (VRES)* - Returnee Information and Referral Centres);
- Systematizing lessons learned from other countries (e.g. Colombia and Mexico) related to reintegration;
- Promoting reintegration services via a campaign directed to returnees in their communities.

### *Fortalecimiento del proceso de integración de Migrantes que Retornan a el Salvador (PIRE)*

Geographical coverage: El Salvador

Project type: Migration and reintegration

Project code: SV10P0003/RT.1297

Project period: 1 February 2017 to 30 September 2018



*Returning migrants participating in evaluation focus group, San Miguel, El Salvador*

### KEY FINDINGS

The project was seen as very relevant for the country and well aligned with national priorities and strategies. It responded to a need to reinforce the capacities within the national response for returning migrants. IOM maintained a close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was able to raise awareness among officials and the community, as well as contribute to improved service delivery and an inter-institutional collaboration in the sector. The long-term impact and sustainability may have been more significant if slightly more investment had been allocated to the project and if some additional measures had been successfully developed, such as creating a returning migration policy to ensure continuation in case of a change in government.

**Relevance (rating: Excellent - 5):** The project was found to be very relevant in that it supported the government in its focus on returning migration and built on already existing programmes and previous collaborations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Effectiveness (rating: Very Good - 4):** The project was recognised as very effective in achieving the objective and outcome with the appropriate activities implemented for its success. Collaboration and coordination were noted as effective.

**Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness (rating: Very Good - 4):** The project was found to be cost effective with the use of financial resources appropriate and all activities carried out within budget with some activities co-financed by other stakeholders

**Impact (rating: Very Good - 4):** In the short term, the project improved knowledge and approaches for civil servants in the management of services for returning migrants. Long-term changes were seen in the government's ability to establish a system for returning migrants through an inter-institutional collaboration. The project was recognised as a model with VRES currently being implemented in Honduras.

**Sustainability (rating: Good - 3):** The sustainability of the project was seen as positive with outputs designed to continue beyond the duration of the project. Feedback from both the Ministry and other stakeholders indicated a motivation to continue building on the project's achievements. Some efforts were also made to secure funding for continued operations.

### Conclusions

The project successfully established a foundation for an inter-institutional cooperation to manage services offered to returning migrants. In addition, the project was able to establish a best practices document for the return and reintegration of migrants, with lessons learned through the visit to Mexico and the trilateral meeting.

Finally, it established a platform of services with a broad collaboration from the public and private sectors to offer through fairs as well as the communication campaigns to target returning migrants. Through the capacity building, and the communication campaigns, the project helped to raise awareness about the issues among the communities in general and placed the issues on the local agendas.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Sustainability

- For IOM El Salvador, maintain a continued link to the project's initiatives; for similar projects in the future, establish a commitment from partners at the project's beginning and reinforce monitoring during the project.

#### B. Returning migrant models

- For all IDF projects on reintegration, consult the model of activities and outputs developed by the IOM El Salvador.

#### C. Financial management

- For all IOM country offices implementing IDF projects on reintegration allocate enough fund to ensure maximum impact.

#### D. Project follow-up and handover

- All IDF projects should have a sustainability and follow-up plan as part of the final report.

#### E. Project management

- Manage the workload of the IDF project manager to allow them enough time to develop and implement the project with sufficient monitoring and reporting and sustainability measures.

#### F. Coordination

- For a hiring process for services such as VRES, IOM could suggest that specific profile descriptions should be developed in order to ensure consistency among offices servicing returning migrants.

#### G. Data management

- For IOM El Salvador, if monitoring has been conducted, it should be followed by a systematic analysis, summary and reporting process.